



Getting the Grant:

A Guide to Securing Additional Funds for After School Education and Safety Programs



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Foreword

California has emerged as a national leader in providing public support for after school programs. With the passage of Proposition 49, voters in the state made one of their largest and most significant commitments to children. In the 2006–07 school year, more than \$500 million will help fund after school programs for children and youth in kindergarten through grade nine. This infusion of new funding almost doubles the number of publicly supported After School Education and Safety (ASES) programs.

As new ASES programs are launched and established programs adjust to provisions of the new law, grantees and program site leaders face several important implementation and financing challenges. Under the terms of Proposition 49, grantees are required to match not less than one-third the amount of their grant. The most immediate challenge facing new ASES grantees and program site leaders is finding funding to make the required match. For those managing more mature programs that have already obtained matching funds, the major challenge is securing adequate funding to ensure the quality of their programs and sustain them over time.

Grant writing is an important way to develop new revenue sources for ASES programs. It is part of a larger strategic financing approach—identifying cash and in-kind resources from a wide array of partners to broaden the base of support that will sustain after school programs—addressed in The Finance Project’s *Making the Match: Finding Funding for After School Education and Safety Programs*. That guide aims to help ASES grantees, partners, program directors, and regional leads meet the ASES Program matching requirement and, more generally, secure adequate funding. It is filled with practical information and guidance on how to attract and work with a multitude of partners; how to adopt a strategic financing approach; where to find funding, beginning with sources closest to home; and how to secure funding.

Getting the Grant: A Guide to Securing Additional Funds for After School Education and Safety Programs serves as a companion publication to *Making the Match*, focusing specifically on how to raise revenue through grants. It aims to provide California leaders in schools, school districts, and community-based organizations with simple, straightforward guidance on how to develop effective grant proposals to garner program support. It outlines considerations for identifying and pursuing grant funding opportunities, reviews the key components of successful grant proposals and offers concrete suggestions for strengthening proposals to improve their likelihood of funding. The guide also includes additional resources and information on sample proposals to help ASES program leaders develop quality grant requests.



Like *Making the Match*, the development of *Getting the Grant* is the result of an intensive and rewarding collaboration among three California foundations—the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, the David and Lucile Packard Foundation, and the Koret Foundation—the California Department of Education, and The Finance Project. It reflects the contributions and hard work of many people. I want to express my deep appreciation to Cheryl Rodgers, Arron Jiron, and Adam Hirschfelder, our foundation program officers, for their support and helpful guidance. I also want to acknowledge the important contributions of Frank Pisi of the California Department of Education, Katie Brackenridge of the Bay Area Partnership, John Duran of Coachella Valley Unified School District, Bobbi Pregmon of San Bernardino City Unified School District, Tina Gridiron Smith of the Lumina Foundation, Lori Ward and Bernadette Yoshida of Stanislaus County Office of Education, and Isabelle Rodriguez Wilson of the Boys and Girls Club of Lake Tahoe. Michelle Ganow Jones played the lead role in writing this guide. She was supported by Brittany Anuszkiewicz, Carol Cohen and Kate Sandel of The Finance Project staff.

Cheryl D. Hayes
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Cheryl D. Hayes".

Writing Grants For Program Support

Californians have made a major commitment to public funding for after school programs through Proposition 49, the After School Education and Safety (ASES) Program. ASES provides funding statewide for schools and community organizations that work in partnership to offer students from kindergarten through ninth grade safe and educationally enriching opportunities before and after the regular school day. Three-year, renewable grants provide \$7.50 per pupil per day, with funding capped at \$112,500 for each elementary school and \$150,000 for each middle or junior high school.

To access these funds, programs must contribute a local match consisting of cash and/or in-kind resources equal to at least one-third of the total grant amount. Matching funds can come from different sources, including school districts, government agencies, community organizations, and private contributions from foundations, businesses, and individuals. In addition to securing the resources required to meet the match, many ASES grantees will seek to supplement their program funding from other sources. The ASES Program provides core support, but additional resources may be necessary to further enhance program offerings and improve the quality and accessibility of services.

For most ASES grantees and program site leaders, securing the funds needed to meet the match and enhance program offerings will require writing grant proposals. Written grant proposals frequently are necessary to obtain funding from both public and private sources. The grant proposal process calls on the potential grantee to think through a project from beginning to end, develop a budget for proposed activities, and devise a way to evaluate anticipated results. Although each funding source will have its own specific directives, successful grant proposals:

- Respond to a funder's interests and program priorities;
- Provide a clear and convincing rationale;
- Offer a defined and compelling plan of action;
- Present a credible statement of anticipated results;
- Demonstrate expertise; and
- Make a reasonable request for resources to do the job.

ASES grantees have already been successful in accessing one key source of renewable core funding through the ASES Program. This guide aims to help grantees and program site leaders develop effective grant proposals and attract additional investments.





About This Guide

Developing a quality grant proposal is part art and part science. The ability to write well and convincingly convey to funders why your program is worthy of their support are essential grant-writing skills. A quality grant proposal also requires that you can articulate a strong vision and mission for your program. Successful grant-writers understand how to respond persuasively to funders' program priorities and how to present clearly and concisely a program's needs and plans for the use of resources.

This guide addresses the fundamentals of grant-writing and provides California leaders in schools, school districts, and community-based organizations with straightforward advice on how to develop effective grant proposals to garner support for after school programs. In addition, the publication presents factors for ASES grantees and program site leaders to consider as they identify and pursue grant funding opportunities. This guidance reflects the good habits that will contribute to programs' success in finding funding and sustaining their work over time.

The second section of the guide summarizes four broad strategies for generating program support from school and community funders, businesses and foundations, local government funds, and state and federal programs. The chapter concludes with a list of questions that ASES grantees and program site leaders should ask before beginning the process of writing a grant proposal to decide whether the exercise is worth the time and effort.

The next section of the guide will help ASES grantees and program site leaders develop an effective grant proposal. It explores the characteristics and elements of a quality grant proposal. Although funders often request a specific format for grant proposals, some elements are common across formats, such as a statement of need, a project description, and a budget. This chapter details exactly what information should be included in each section of the proposal.

The final section offers tips for how to make a proposal as strong as possible while avoiding some common proposal-writing pitfalls. Included in the appendices are a sample after school program logic model; a list of websites to access examples of quality grant requests; and a list of organizations, publications, and websites that can provide more information on funding sources and grant-writing.

Identifying Grant Opportunities

Identifying grant opportunities is a three-step process that should be undertaken before writing any grant proposal. It involves positioning your program for support, finding funding to support your program, and doing your homework to find the right funding source.

Positioning Your Program for Support

Even prior to beginning to write a grant proposal, several actions can help ensure that ASES grantees and program site leaders are in the best possible position to attract funding:

- Adopt a strategic financing approach;
- Refine your program's vision and results;
- Familiarize yourself with the funding environment;
- Seek diverse funding sources;
- Make finding funding part of your routine; and
- Ask for help.

Although these activities are not exclusive to seeking grant support, they reflect good practices followed by programs with a successful record of finding funding and sustaining their work over time. Programs that engage in these activities generally will have an easier time of identifying grant opportunities, understanding how their work fits with a funder's priorities, and making an effective case for program support.

Adopt a Strategic Financing Approach

Before looking for new funding, ASES grantees and program site leaders must be familiar with their program's expenses, its current sources of funding, and the funding gaps to be filled. Adopting a strategic financing approach can help you make the most of efforts to secure the required matching funds and other resources. See "What Does It Mean to Adopt a Strategic Financing Approach?" on page 10 for further discussion on how to think strategically about program financing.





What Does It Mean to Adopt a Strategic Financing Approach?

Adopting a strategic financing approach helps you align the funding sources and financing strategies you decide to pursue with your specific financing needs. Developing a strategic approach involves several key steps.

- Step 1: Clarify what funding you need.
- Step 2: Estimate what program components, activities, and improvements will cost.
- Step 3: Have a complete picture of the resources already available to your program.
- Step 4: Identify funding gaps.
- Step 5: Determine what funding sources and financing strategies can help you fill these gaps.

The Finance Project's *Sustainability Planning Workbook* provides a step-by-step process for developing a strategic financing plan as part of your program's strategies for sustainability see <http://www.financeproject.org/engage/workbook.asp>.

Refine Your Program's Vision and Results

Being able to articulate what outcomes your ASES Program plans to achieve and knowing how you will determine whether you are successful are essential. A vision captures what you want to achieve in a compelling and inspiring statement and addresses what success looks like for your program. Results describe discrete long-term goals for the children, families, and community with whom you work. Generally, results are broad conditions of well-being for which no single initiative or program in the community is responsible. They include, for example, children and youth will be safe and/or children and youth will succeed in school. Work with your program's stakeholders to clarify your program's vision and results before applying for funding.

Familiarize Yourself with the Funding Environment

Various public, private, and in-kind resources can provide program support. ASES grantees and program site leaders must become familiar with the major sources available at the community, state, and national levels. The resources listed in Appendix C and in the publication *Making the Match: Finding Funding for After School Education and Safety Programs* will help you do so (see "Making the Match" on page 12). Moreover, networking with other programs, community leaders, and potential funders can be an effective way to learn about the funding environment. Reviewing the websites, newsletters, and annual reports of other youth-serving organizations can also provide useful information about who is funding what initiative in your community.

Seek Diverse Funding Sources

Maintaining a diverse portfolio of public and private funds can help ensure that your program continues to thrive when any one funding source ends. Ideally, your program will receive funding from multiple sources with a balance of:

- Public and private funding;
- Long- and short-term support;
- Flexible and categorical funds; and
- Cash and in-kind support.

Think about program funding in terms of core support, which the ASES Program provides, supplemented by funding for individual program components. Consider adding further flexibility to your budget by generating your own funds through program fees or community fundraising. Be entrepreneurial and creative in seeking different funding sources.

Make Finding Funding Part of Your Routine

Do not wait until a grant is about to end to start looking for additional funding. By planning ahead and continually identifying potential sources of program support, you will have ample time to collaborate with community partners and consider funding sources that may be available. Take stock of your program's capacity to identify resources on an ongoing basis and identify partners and staff responsible for fundraising and building relationships.

Ask for Help

Reach out to other after school programs and stakeholders in your community. After school programs are often more successful in attracting sizable investments when they work with other programs in the community. Seek the assistance of community partners to develop a plan for sustaining your program and cultivate champions who can advocate for your ASES-funded program. Consider developing a community-wide plan for funding after school programs.





Finding Funding to Support Your Program

Part of the challenge of finding funding to support your program is knowing where to find information on potential sources of support. Another part is deciding whether it is worth the time and resources to develop a grant proposal once you identify a funding opportunity. Different funding sources can support after school program activities, including federal, state, and local public funding sources; community, family, independent, and corporate foundations; the business community; community fundraisers; and individual donors. The goal is to filter through the funding opportunities to identify those with the most potential to support your program, without letting the job of finding funding become overwhelming. Programs can save time and effort and increase their chances of success by knowing the political landscape for funding and by building connections to the people who have information about and, in some cases, control of, public and private grant resources.

Before exploring the steps involved in looking for grant funding, it is important to understand the potential funders for which your program may be writing grant proposals. The publication *Making the Match: Finding Funding for After School Education and Safety Programs* presents four broad strategies to generate program support by accessing:

- School and community resources;
- Business and foundation support;
- Local government resources; and
- State and federal funding.

These strategies also are relevant for programs seeking to supplement their ASES funding to enhance program offerings. Some potential funders will require ASES grantees and program site leaders to submit a written grant request before they will commit to provide program support. You will find more detailed information on the funders and funding opportunities described in this section in *Making the Match*. In addition, Appendix C lists resources from The Finance Project and other organizations that can help you identify potential funding sources.

Making the Match

The Finance Project's *Making the Match: Finding Funding for After School Education and Safety Programs* helps ASES grantees identify opportunities to raise cash and in-kind resources needed to meet grant requirements as well as to finance and sustain programs today and in the future. The publication offers practical information on potential funding opportunities for ASES-funded programs, including tips and tools for successfully accessing those opportunities. Examples of how the proposed funding strategies have been implemented in California communities also are presented. *Making the Match* is available at <http://www.financeproject.org/pubs/index.asp>.

Accessing School and Community Resources

Schools and school districts manage several federal funding sources authorized by the federal *No Child Left Behind Act of 2001* that could provide funding for ASES-funded programs.¹ In addition to direct support, schools and school districts can support ASES grantees by providing facilities, supplies, services, technical assistance, and fundraising help.

Besides schools and school districts, various public and private organizations and individuals in the community can provide support to California's ASES grantees and program site leaders. In addition to financial support, these community partners can connect programs with resources that include volunteers, key champions, donated goods and services, and support for local fundraising activities. *Making the Match* offers several suggestions for how ASES grantees and program site leaders can encourage community engagement and promote program visibility.

Accessing Business and Foundation Support

Business and foundation leaders understand the positive effects that after school programs can have on youth and on the economic vitality of communities. Like school and community partners, they can be important sources of support for your program. Consider what connections your program and its supporters have to local businesses.

Aligning with popular community programs helps businesses build the community “feel good” quotient and benefits companies by boosting good will, by raising visibility, and by creating a sense of community involvement that may help attract and retain good employees and, perhaps, increase sales. Corporate supporters frequently ask for public recognition of their company's support. Whether they give through a corporate foundation or provide direct support through corporate sponsorships and donations, businesses can be strong partners for after school programs. The organization, Corporate Voices for Working Families, has developed materials to promote business engagement in after school programs (see Appendix C for more information).

Across the nation, foundations have made significant investments in after school programs. Foundations almost always require written grant proposals. In addition to direct program support, foundations invest in research, advocacy, technical assistance, professional development, and other efforts of broad benefit to the after school field. Foundations can be grouped in these categories.

- **Independent foundations.** Independent foundations are private grant-making organizations whose endowment is typically derived from a single source. These foundations often define a few specific fields in which they focus their giving and may limit their giving to a specific geographic region or area. Several independent foundations are family foundations, with funds coming from a single family and family members typically serving on the board of trustees or in leadership roles.

¹ Ayeola Fortune, Heather Clapp Padgett, and Lucinda Fickel, *Using NCLB Funds to Support Extended Learning Time: Opportunities for Afterschool Programs* (Washington, D.C.: Council of Chief State School Officers and The Finance Project, August 2005).



- **Corporate foundations and corporate giving programs.** Corporate foundations are private grant-making organizations whose endowment and annual contributions come from a profit-making corporation. Corporate giving programs do not have a separate endowment and are not subject to the same rules and regulations as private foundations. For both types of corporate grant-making bodies, support tends to be in fields related to corporate activities and/or in communities where the company operates.
- **Community foundations.** Community foundations are publicly sponsored grant-making organizations whose contributions are typically received from many donors and whose grants are limited to charitable organizations in a specific city, county, or metropolitan area. Community foundations often play two roles; they manage funds for donors (i.e., donor-directed funds) and they make community grants from the foundation's endowment.
- **Local United Way organizations.** United Way is a national network of more than 1,300 locally governed organizations. Many communities have a local United Way that conducts annual fundraising campaigns and distributes grants to support local initiatives. Each local United Way sets its own priorities and selects initiatives to support. Across local United Way organizations, common focus areas include helping children and youth succeed, improving access to health care, promoting self-sufficiency, and strengthening families.

Resources such as the California Foundation DataBook and the Foundation Center can direct you to foundations with a specific interest in after school programs. See Appendix C for more information.



Accessing Local Government Resources

City, county, and tribal governments also have resources that can support ASES grantees and other after school programs. Local public funding can come from many different offices and agencies, including parks and recreation departments, law enforcement offices, cooperative extension services (4-H) offices, county and tribal governments, and the mayor's office.

In California, local governments are important conduits for public funding. In many cases, they are responsible for allocating federal and state program funds to local programs and organizations. In addition, local governments have the authority to generate revenue through various taxes and fees (e.g., property taxes, sales taxes, and user fees) that can support children's services, including after school programs. For more information, see The Finance Project's *Creating Dedicated Local and State Revenue Sources for Youth Programs* at http://www.financeproject.org/publications/DLR_PM.pdf.

Accessing State and Federal Funding

For many after school programs, state and federal resources are an important part of a diverse funding portfolio. State and federal funding can substantially expand resources for programs, provide stable support, and free up local revenues and private funding for other purposes. Various public funding sources administered at the federal and state levels have the potential to support California's ASES-funded programs. ASES grantees and program site leaders can explore partnerships with staff from state and federal agencies that administer programs related to:

- Education;
- Human Services;
- Health and /Mental Health;
- Law Enforcement and Juvenile Justice;
- Food and Nutrition;
- Community Services; and
- Community Development.

Federal Funding. Federal funding, provided by many different agencies through various funding mechanisms, can provide significant resources to after school programs, especially those serving low-income families.² Multiple federal agencies offer grant programs for specific purposes, audiences, and providers.

² Dionne Dobbins-Harper and Soumya Bhat, *Finding Funding: A Guide to Federal Sources for Youth Programs* (Washington, D.C.: The Finance Project, January 2007).



State Funding. California leads the nation in investing in after school programs. Several state public funding sources, in addition to ASES, can be used to support ASES and other after school programs. Most available state funds come from the California Department of Education’s Healthy Start, Tobacco-Use Prevention Education, and School Community Violence Prevention programs. Additional support for after school programs is available from state juvenile justice and mental health funding sources.

In addition to *Making the Match*, several publications from The Finance Project offer detailed guidance on accessing public funding sources. Resources from The Finance Project are described in Appendix C.

Doing Your Homework to Find the Right Funding Source

Once you have identified a potential funding source for which you plan to write a grant proposal, how do you evaluate whether it is a good match for your funding needs? How do you ensure that your program is a good fit with the priorities and requirements of that funding source? The following checklist itemizes the questions you should ask before beginning the process of writing a grant proposal to decide whether the exercise is worth the time and effort.

- ☐ How much revenue can be generated?
- ☐ Are there any matching requirements?
- ☐ Who is eligible to apply for funding?
- ☐ How can the funds be used?
- ☐ What is the administrative burden?
- ☐ What is the application and decision-making process?
- ☐ When will the funds be available?
- ☐ How does this source complement your existing funding mix?
- ☐ What are the political considerations?

How Much Revenue Can Be Generated?

Before writing a grant proposal, you must know how much you plan to request and what is reasonable to expect from a particular funding source. For some funders and funding sources, information about the total amount of funding available, the number of grantees to be funded, and the size of grant awards may be readily available. In other cases, you may have to do a little investigating to answer these questions. Appendix C lists resources to obtain more information.

Determining what grants were made in the past can be instructive. For public funding sources, this information frequently is available on agency websites. Many private foundations' websites and annual reports list the grants they have made. Other resources, such as the Foundation Center, provide access to Internal Revenue Service forms that include listings of major grants awarded during any given year.

Are There Any Matching Requirements?

Both public and private funders want to see that their investments are maximized. A requirement that programs must provide a match to receive a grant is one way funders can leverage their investments; this is why California requires a local match in the ASES Program. A match requirement can also be a strategy to promote program sustainability by ensuring programs draw on more than one funding source. In some cases, a funder will increase the match requirement over a multiyear grant period so a higher match is required toward the end of the grant, in a sense, "weaning" the program off the grant.

Who Is Eligible to Apply for Funding?

Ensuring that your program is eligible to apply for a grant is most important. Many private foundations will only support 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organizations. If your program or organization does not have 501(c)(3) status, however, this does not mean you should write off foundations that will only support such organizations. You may need to find a fiscal agent to help you apply for the grant; a fiscal agent is an organization that is eligible to apply for funding and that can manage the grant on your behalf, such as a public education foundation. Or you may want to consider applying for funding with another program that is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, for example, a community-based organization with which you partner.

Entities that are eligible to apply for public funding sources are usually specified in the grant announcement. In some cases, the grant will be open to any public or private organization. In other cases, eligibility may be limited, for example, to state and local government entities, local education agencies, law enforcement agencies, or institutions of higher education. As with foundations, if your program is not among the entities eligible to receive funding, consider whether partnership opportunities exist with an organization that is eligible to receive the grant funds.



How Can the Funds Be Used?

Research what the grant funding source you have identified can and cannot fund; some sources are quite flexible, while others are extremely specific, about the purposes and activities for which grant funds can be used. If you are approaching a foundation, find out what kinds of support the foundation does and does not provide. For example, some foundations neither provide ongoing operating support nor fund capital campaigns. Other foundations may give priority to these types of grant requests. Do your homework on what purposes and activities the funder or funding source will support and make sure there is a match with your funding needs. If a funder is open to contact prior to the submission of a grant request, you may want to call to ask questions, which can also be a good way to begin building a relationship.

What Is the Administrative Burden?

Clearly understand any requirements attached to a potential grant funding source. What reports will the funder expect you to provide and with what frequency? Are there evaluation or data collection requirements? What other recordkeeping is required? Ensure you can meet all the requirements of a grant or identify people and organizations that can help you do so before you apply.

What Is the Application and Decision-Making Process?

Find out the steps involved in submitting a proposal for funding. Different funders have different processes for making grant awards. For example, some foundations do not accept unsolicited proposals. Instead, they require prospective grantees to submit a letter of inquiry with a brief description of the project to be funded; only selected programs are then invited to submit full proposals. If you are submitting a grant proposal, does the funder require you to use a certain application form or follow a particular format? What supporting materials should you submit with your grant proposal? Make certain you know and follow all the guidelines provided, paying close attention to details such as font, type size, page length, line spacing, and number of originals and copies to provide. Find out how the proposal should be submitted (e.g., electronically or in hard copy (stapled or in a binder clip)). You do not want to miss out on a funding opportunity simply because you did not follow the directions.

Also research how decisions are made. Who decides what programs are funded? Is there a review committee? Does a foundation board meet to approve grant requests? If so, how regularly does the board meet? Find out when you will receive notification of the funding decision. In some cases, you may hear relatively quickly about whether the request was approved. In other cases, it can take six to nine months for a decision to be made.

When Will the Funds Be Available?

A related consideration is the timing of the grant. Investigate when you would receive the funds and the funding cycle of the grant (i.e., when the grant begins and ends). You will want to make sure the timing will meet your fiscal needs.

How Does this Source Complement Your Existing Funding Mix?

Ideally, your program will have a diverse mix of funding that includes public and private sources, long- and short-term support, and flexible and categorical funds. When applying for a new grant, review your current funding mix and take into account how that source will add to the mix. If you are overly dependent on a particular type of funding, such as public funding sources or one-year grants, you may want to adjust your funding strategy and seek more diverse sources of support.

What Are the Political Considerations?

Unless there has been an increase in the funding available, other programs in your community may already be recipients of the funding source for which you are applying. As you make the case for why your program is the most deserving grantee, be aware of any potential turf issues that could arise.





Writing a Quality Grant Proposal

After you have identified the funding opportunities that offer the greatest potential, the next step is to develop an effective grant proposal to make the case for why your program should receive funding. Successful proposals have certain characteristics and include specific elements.

Characteristics of a Successful Grant Proposal

ASES grantees and program site leaders should understand that their funding requests will have a better chance of success if they:

- Respond to the funder's interests and program priorities;
- Provide a clear and convincing rationale;
- Offer a defined and compelling plan of action;
- Present a credible statement of anticipated results;
- Demonstrate expertise; and
- Make a reasonable request for resources to do the job.

Respond to the Funder's Interests and Program Priorities

The proposal should make a clear connection between the funder's identified interests and priorities and how your project or program meets those interests and priorities, such as in these examples.

Funder's Interest/Program Priority	How Interest/Priority Is Addressed:
Youth Development	Program provides supports and services to youth based on the principles of positive youth development.
Juvenile Justice	Program offers youth a safe and enriching environment in which to develop new skills and avoid risky behaviors.
Education	Program promotes and strengthens academic skills and performance.



Provide a Clear and Convincing Rationale

The proposal not only must demonstrate why the funder should be interested in your program, but also make the case for why your program is needed in your community. What is the problem to be addressed and how does your program address that problem?

Offer a Defined and Compelling Plan of Action

Successful proposals lay out a clear plan of action for how the proposed project will address the problem statement. They also describe the program design and discuss how the project will be implemented.

Present a Credible Statement of Anticipated Results

Funders want to see that potential grantees have clearly defined project outcomes. They also want to see a plan to evaluate progress toward those results.

Demonstrate Expertise

Successful proposals make clear why the applicant is well positioned to carry out the work. Funders also want to ensure the applicant has a clear understanding of the field and has demonstrated capacity for implementing the proposed project or program.

Make a Reasonable Request for Resources to Do the Job

Successful proposals establish that the amount requested is appropriate for the scope of work proposed. They also persuade funders that the funds will be well managed.



Elements of a Successful Grant Proposal

Funders often have a specific format for their grants, and you should always follow a funder's requested format. Still, some elements of proposals are common across formats; for example, almost every proposal format will require a statement of need, a project description, and a budget.

A quality proposal generally includes these elements:

- Cover letter
- Executive summary
- Introduction
- Problem statement
- Plan of action
- Program budget and budget narrative
- Organizational qualifications
- Leadership and staffing information
- Performance measurement or evaluation plan
- Sustainability plan
- Conclusion
- Addenda

Appendix B lists websites to access examples of proposals written for various funders, including corporations, private foundations, and federal, state, and local government agencies.

Cover Letter

More than likely, you will transmit your request for funding with a cover letter. The cover letter should be written on the requesting organization's letterhead and signed by its executive director or chief executive officer. The cover letter provides a concise overview of the amount of funding requested and the purpose of the grant.

Executive Summary

This proposal element is also sometimes referred to as the proposal summary or proposal cover sheet. In two or three paragraphs, the executive summary should introduce the proposal and provide the funder with an overview of your grant request.



The executive summary is an opportunity to state your case. As briefly as possible, use the summary to accomplish these objectives.

- **Explain to the funder the purpose of your grant request.** What is the problem that your project will address? Briefly describe the project for which you are requesting support.
- **Demonstrate your organizational capacity and how the project fits within your organization's mission.** Why should the grant-maker support your organization to undertake this project?
- **Establish how the proposed project matches the funder's priorities.** Clarify how your program or project is a good fit with the funder's mission and goals and/or the stated objectives of the grant program.
- **Indicate the amount requested.** The summary should make note of the total amount requested to undertake the work outlined in the proposal.

Introduction

The introduction presents background information and a clear rationale for your proposed project. Use the introduction to demonstrate to the funder that you have a clear understanding of the context in which you operate and are familiar with research and best practices in the field. This establishes your credibility to deal with the issues that your project addresses.

Problem Statement

The proposal narrative defines the problem, a critical element of the proposal. The problem statement should achieve these purposes.

- **Explain the need that your project will address.** What is the problem, what are its causes, and what are some potential approaches or solutions to the problem?
- **Describe the target population.** Who in your community is affected by the problem that your program will address?
- **Document what is being done to address the problem.** What other programs or initiatives are aimed at this problem and why is your program needed?
- **Detail your project goals and objectives.** What are your project's goals and desired outcomes? (see "Using a Logic Model to Illustrate Your Goals and Objectives" on page 25). Your problem statement should respond briefly to several questions, with more detail provided in the plan of action.
 - *What do you plan to achieve?* Explain the goals of your after school program and how your project is designed to impact the identified problem. What is the vision for your project? Describe long-term success.

- *What are your intended outcomes?* If your program succeeds in meeting its goals, what effect will it have on the identified problem? What measurable changes would occur in the community?
- *How will your program meet those outcomes?* The proposal may make a compelling case for why a problem must be addressed, but you must persuade potential funders that your project is the right project to address the problem. How have you designed the project to improve the lives of the target population?

Using a Logic Model to Illustrate Your Goals and Objectives

A logic model can be an effective way to illustrate your after school program's goals and objectives. It addresses whether the results you want to achieve will occur from the strategies and activities you employ. A logic model is a powerful tool for presenting an initiative's theory of change. Increasingly, funders are requiring grantees to develop these models as part of their grant application or as a condition of their receiving grant funds.

Logic models have different formats and language. Most address these elements.

- **Vision and desired results.** What is your after school program's long-term vision for the well-being of children, families, and/or communities?
- **Conditions and causes.** What conditions, causes, circumstances, factors, or issues need to change to achieve the desired results?
- **Strategies and activities.** To change the underlying conditions and causes, what are the broad approaches as well as specific actions, services, and interventions that your after school program will undertake?
- **Indicators and performance measures.** How will you measure your progress? What measures will you use to track community-wide results as well as results that reflect how your program is implementing its strategies and activities? What effect is your program having on the target population?

Appendix A presents a sample logic model from a hypothetical after school program. The Finance Project's *Sustainability Planning Workbook* includes a step-by-step process for developing a program's logic model as part of sustainability planning see <http://www.financeproject.org/engage/workbook.asp>.



Plan of Action

The plan of action is the heart of your funding request. This is your opportunity to sell a potential funder on the merits of your program. Provide a complete description of the activities you will undertake and explain your plan for implementation. Given the information you need to cover in the plan of action, this will likely be the longest section of the proposal.

ASES grantees and program site leaders should focus on these items.

- **Briefly restate the problem.** Remind your reader what issue(s) in your community your after school program will address.
- **Describe your program.** Clearly and completely, within the space you have available, explain what your program does (or will do, if you are proposing a new program element or set of activities).
 - Describe the major activities of your program and why you believe those activities are best suited to address the identified problem. Indicate the scale and scope of your effort: How many clients will you serve? In how many locations? During what times? Provide information that will give a prospective funder a clear picture of the activities for which you seek support.
 - Elaborate on the target population for your program. Whom will your program serve? How will you identify your target population? What outreach will you conduct to ensure your target population receives your services?
 - Make a compelling case for why the program design you have chosen will achieve the anticipated results. Why did you choose your program design over other strategies? What evidence do you have that your after school program will be effective in reaching the goals you have defined?
- **Present the timeline for your project.** Lay out how you will implement your project during the grant period. Your timeline should clearly indicate the specific steps you will take to implement the project and who will be responsible for the work.
- **Demonstrate how this program fits with your organizational mission.** Funders will want to see that the proposed program is a good fit with your organization's mission. Indicate how the program complements or is a natural extension of work your organization already does.

Program Budget and Budget Narrative

What is the cost of the proposed project or activity? Is the cost reasonable? The proposal should include two elements to provide this information: a budget, which presents an itemized request for funding, and a budget narrative, which describes how you formulated your cost estimates.

Often, the project budget must be presented in a specified format, which may require you to use different fiscal years or budget categories than you use in your ASES Program operating budget. If funding for a specific project is being proposed, as opposed to funding for general program operations, then funders will often request both a budget for that specific project as well as a budget for the entire program.

In general, the budget format will require you to present your costs in categories such as salaries and fringe, facilities, travel, postage, office supplies, insurance, and audit. Many funders place a limit on the percentage of indirect, administrative, or overhead costs they will permit the grant to support. In addition to cost information, the budget details committed and pending sources of revenue.

The budget narrative is the written description of the budget. The narrative walks through each line of the budget and provides an explanation of the program costs. The budget narrative also serves as a link between the budget and the proposal narrative and justifies how the funds requested will support the execution of the tasks described in the proposal.

Organizational Qualifications

The requesting organization must convince a prospective funder that it has the qualifications and the capacity to carry out the planned scope of work. This section of the proposal needs to make the case as to why the grant-maker should support your organization to undertake the proposed activities. You must prove to the funder that you have the capacity to do what you are proposing. This section should achieve these purposes.

- **Present an overview of your organization.** You should provide a brief description of your program's history, mission, and goals. This will give funders a sense of who you are and where you are going.
- **Provide information on your current programs and the population(s) you reach.** Building on the organizational overview, in which you described who you are, now explain what you do. What services or activities does your program provide? What population(s) do you serve?
- **Summarize your track record and accomplishments.** This is the place to toot your own horn. What are some organizational accomplishments you can highlight in the request? How would you describe your ASES-funded program's track record to a prospective funder?





Leadership and Staffing Information

In addition to describing organizational qualifications, your proposal should present a management plan and staff qualifications. This element provides the following information.

- **Description of how your program is structured and staffed.** Give the proposal reader a sense of how your ASES-funded program operates. What is your operational structure? Who are your major partners? How do you manage your work? How many staff do you employ? These are among the questions to answer in this section of the proposal.
- **Management plan.** Presenting your plan for how the proposed project will be managed and staffed is a critical piece of the proposal. In this section, list key project staff and, if space permits, include one-paragraph biographies for those staff. You may want to include longer biographies or resumes if the proposal format permits the inclusion of supplemental materials.

Performance Measurement or Evaluation Plan

The performance measurement component of the proposal provides an opportunity to demonstrate your commitment to accountability. This section may also be referred to as the evaluation plan; if so, how formal that evaluation must be will vary by funder. The proposal must address how you will define and measure success for the proposed project. See "Using Performance Measures to Track Your Progress" on page 29 for examples of two types of performance measures.

Performance measures demonstrate how you will measure progress toward your intended outcomes, as identified in the problem statement, and the impact of your major program activities, as described in the plan of action. A logic model is an effective tool for illustrating the connection between all of these (see "Using a Logic Model to Illustrate Your Goals and Objectives" on page 25).

Performance measures should be realistic. Propose measures on which you think your work will have a reasonable impact and for which you have measurement tools or data available. When possible and desirable, use the same set of outcomes and performance measures for all funders, so you can coordinate your data collection and analysis efforts across multiple grant sources.

In addition to describing any measures you will use to assess progress, the proposal needs to address your plans for collecting and using data to assess and improve performance. You may have developed wonderful performance measures but, without a plan to gather and analyze information, they will not be of much use to you or your program. You should describe any evaluation tools you will use to measure outcomes, such as surveys, student data, or assessment tools.

Using Performance Measures to Track Your Progress

How will you measure your progress? Consider presenting two main types of performance measures for your proposed scope of work: measures of effort and measures of effect. The sample after school program logic model in Appendix A includes examples of both types of performance measures.

- Measures of effort reflect the level or quality of activity. They quantify the actions you take, the amount of services you provide, the products you produce, the money you raise or spend, and the number of people you serve. Measures of effort can include:
 - Materials that go into a program (e.g., money raised to support program activities or volunteers);
 - The quantity of activity produced because of the program, such as the number of students served, the frequency of attendance, or the range of activities offered; and
 - Measures of the quality of the program, for example, student satisfaction.
- Measures of effect reflect the impact of your work on the children, families, communities, and systems you are targeting. They try to measure whether your work has contributed to positive changes in individuals, families, communities, or systems. Measures of effect can reflect changes in knowledge, skills, attitudes, behaviors, functioning, or status.





Sustainability Plan

Increasingly, funders are requiring potential grantees to address in their proposals how they intend to sustain the project beyond the period of the grant. They are making this demand because they do not want to be in a position of starting up or supporting programs or services that will not last beyond the life of the grant; instead, they want to make lasting changes in the communities in which they invest. Even if the proposal requirements do not explicitly call for you to address sustainability in your grant proposal, doing so can assure the funder that you are planning for the future. In this section of the proposal, you should answer the following questions.

- **What is your plan for continuation beyond the grant period?** Provide your initial thinking on how you will sustain the activities for which funds are being requested. You may have a very clear strategy for how community resources will replace the grant at the end of the funding cycle but, more likely, you will not have all the answers at the time you are writing the grant. Demonstrate that you are thinking about sustainability and that you have a strategy for addressing the sustainability of your project (e.g., a plan to engage program stakeholders in a sustainability planning process).
- **Can you leverage the requested funds?** Just as funders want to see that their grantees are thinking long term about sustainability, they also like to see that programs are seeking multiple sources of funding. Most funders also encourage programs to leverage their grants to attract additional funders. In this section of the proposal, you should indicate whether you plan to approach other funders to provide support. In addition, you should describe any plans to use the requested funds as matching funds for another funding opportunity, including ASES and other sources that require a match.

ASES-funded programs have the significant advantage of a renewable source of core funding through their ASES grant. Emphasize to other funders the benefit of building on this relatively stable funding base.

Conclusion

Think of the conclusion as an even shorter version of your executive summary. The conclusion should briefly summarize your request. It should cover the amount requested, the problem your program addresses, how your program addresses the problem, and how the requested funds will support your work.



Addenda

Often, the application guidelines will require you to provide certain addenda or attachments. Addenda that may be requested include:

- Certificate of incorporation and bylaws
- Internal Revenue Service 501(c)(3) determination letter
- Audited financial statements
- Operating budget
- List of other current funding sources
- Annual report
- List of officers and board of director members
- Biographies and resumes of key staff
- Commitment letters or memoranda of understanding from partners or program consultants

If the guidelines permit you to include supplemental information with the proposal, consider what other information would strengthen your case, such as the following.

- **Additional information about your program.** Is there additional program documentation that you could provide, such as a typical schedule of program activities, an evaluation plan (or, even better, evaluation findings), or an article about your program from a local newspaper?
- **Letters of support.** Approach your community partners, key stakeholders, and parents of the children you serve to determine whether they would be willing to write letters in support of your grant proposal. These letters can help show that your program is a vital part of the community fabric and that your program has broad community support.

Make sure the supplemental materials you provide are important and useful. You do not want to overwhelm the grant reviewer with extraneous information.



Winning the Grant

Many factors beyond your control can result in an unfunded grant request. Yet ASES grantees and program site leaders can follow several tips to help ensure success. Avoiding some common grant-writing pitfalls can also contribute to winning the grant.

Grant-Writing Tips to Follow

So what steps can you take to write a winning funding request? Following these tips can strengthen your grant application.

Tips for Successful Proposal Writing

- Do your research.
- Review proposal requirements and follow directions.
- Ask questions.
- Be organized, clear, and concise in your request.
- Proofread the proposal.
- Seek help when you need it.
- Start early and be patient.
- Remember that writing proposals gets easier over time.

Do Your Research

This guide and *Making the Match* both provide basic information on how to identify potential funders for your ASES-funded program, but not all funders will be a good fit. You will need to do additional research to narrow the grant and other funding opportunities that are best suited to your circumstances. The resources listed in Appendix C can provide more information. Review Chapter 2 of this guide and make sure you have the answers to these questions before you begin to write your proposal:

- ☐ How much revenue can be generated?
- ☐ Are there any matching requirements?
- ☐ Who is eligible to apply for funding?
- ☐ How can the funds be used?
- ☐ What is the administrative burden?
- ☐ What is the application and decision making process?
- ☐ When will the funds be available?
- ☐ How does this source complement your existing funding mix?
- ☐ What are the political considerations?



Take the time to build relationships and promote your ASES Program and its successes. Get to know key decision-makers and community leaders and familiarize them with your program, including state and local elected officials and their staff, leaders and staff of government agencies, foundation program officers, members of the business community, and leaders of other community-based organizations.

Review Proposal Requirements and Follow Directions

It may sound simple enough, but many good proposals are turned down simply for not following directions; even relatively minor infractions, such as using the wrong font or going over the page limit, can be grounds for rejection. Pay close attention to application deadlines; guidance for submitting the proposal (e.g., in hard copy or electronically); how many copies you should provide; any supplemental information you are requested to provide; guidelines regarding letters of commitment or support; and all formatting requirements, including length, margins, font, and type size.

Ask Questions

If any of the proposal guidelines are unclear to you, if you have a question about a funder's decision-making process, or even if you are unsure about whether your program is a potential fit with a funder's interests, do not be afraid to ask questions. Most funders are happy to answer your questions over the phone, even if they cannot assure you that your program will receive funding. Many may even be willing to meet with you in person, which is a wonderful opportunity to introduce your program and begin to develop a relationship.

Be Organized, Clear, and Concise in Your Request

Successful proposals are well written, clearly articulated, and to the point. Good structure and organization will make it easier to build a compelling case for funding your after school program. The pointers offered in this guide will help ensure that your proposal is persuasive and well written.

Proofread the Proposal

Give your proposal a careful review before you submit it. Make sure the funding request has correct grammar and spelling. Compare your scope of work, budget, and timeline to ensure there are no inconsistencies in what you have proposed. Review your budget information and double-check your math. Make sure your budget numbers add up and your budget narrative agrees with your budget tables. Finally, it is always a good idea to ask someone who was not involved in developing the proposal to review it. Preferably, select someone for the task who is familiar with your program and whom you consider to be a good writer.

Seek Help When You Need It

Do not be reluctant to seek help with grant-writing. Consult the grant-writing resources identified in Appendix C for more information and guidance. If you need additional support with writing grants, consider whether you can identify any volunteer assistance. Some programs have found help from school district personnel, local community college staff, and parent volunteers with grant-writing experience. Of course, if you have the resources, you can always consider hiring a professional grant-writer. A professional grant-writer can be particularly helpful in developing some of the boilerplate you can adapt to use in any proposal (e.g., the problem statement and organizational qualifications).

Start Early and Be Patient

Do not wait until you are in a funding crunch to start applying for additional resources. Be aware of how long it will take from application to approval. For some funders, approving a grant can be a lengthy process, so you will want to begin to identify funding well before you need it. Keep in mind you may need to approach several funders for support. Seeking multiple funders has other advantages; knowing your program is pursuing several funding opportunities may ease the mind of your potential funder, because funders are often reluctant to assume the responsibility of being the sole source of support. Having a diverse funding portfolio is also a critical sustainability strategy for your ASES-funded program. Once your program has secured funding, consider whether that support can be leveraged in any way. Can you use the grant as a challenge grant to encourage additional program support? Can one grant count toward the required match for another funding source?

Remember That Writing Proposals Gets Easier Over Time

As you apply for more grants, you will realize that many proposal components can be adapted and used repeatedly. To make writing the next proposal much easier, store your electronic and hard copies of proposal information in one place, including any research you did while developing a proposal and final copies of your grant applications. Knowing where to locate information from previous proposals will make it easier the next time you are working on a proposal. You should also develop a system for tracking and managing your grants and proposals. Even something as simple as a table that indicates when proposal deadlines fall, what proposals are outstanding, when you can expect to receive notice of decisions, and when current grants expire will help you to stay on top of your funding needs.



Grant-Writing Pitfalls to Avoid

So what are some things to avoid when writing a grant proposal? Just as there are tips for making your funding request as strong as it can be, these are some common grant-writing mistakes you should be careful to avoid.

Common Grant-Writing Mistakes

- Failing to provide a convincing rationale
- Being overly ambitious
- Leaving ideas undefined
- Providing too much or not enough detail
- Failing to demonstrate community support
- Not following directions
- Using jargon and acronyms

Failing to Provide a Convincing Rationale

Weak proposals do not articulate the problem to be addressed. Moreover, they may not effectively make the case that the requesting organization is well positioned to address the problem. Proposals that lack a convincing rationale do not clearly explain why the grant is being requested, what the grant-maker's funds will support, and how the requesting organization's program is a good fit with the funder's priorities.

Being Overly Ambitious

Proposals can be overly ambitious in several ways. Too lofty aspirations can leave the grant-reader skeptical that your program has the capacity to carry out the work described. Or, the grant-reader may review your scope of work and feel it is too ambitious relative to the funding being requested. Be careful not to overpromise with respect to the outcomes your program expects to achieve. If you are unable to deliver, you risk undermining your reputation.

Leaving Ideas Undefined

Writing proposals can be challenging, because sometimes you are writing about activities that you plan to undertake and are still working out the details. Wherever you are in your planning process—from the early stages to well into implementation—avoid writing a proposal that is vague and poorly conceived.

Providing Too Much or Not Enough Detail

A quality grant proposal provides enough information so your reader understands what you plan to accomplish while not overwhelming him or her with too many specifics. Striking the right balance between too much or not enough detail can be challenging given the constraints of proposal formats, but it is extremely important to do so.

Failing to Demonstrate Community Support

Funders will look to your proposal to describe how your program fits with other efforts in the community. Failure to describe relationships or connections between your program and similar initiatives may raise a red flag for a potential funder. Similarly, funders may become concerned about the strength and sustainability of your program if your grant request does not describe your key partners or demonstrate stakeholder support.

Not Following Directions

The importance of strictly adhering to a funder's proposal guidelines simply cannot be stressed enough. Many funding requests are denied because the requesting organization failed to submit the proposal in the format prescribed by the funder.

Using Jargon and Acronyms

Do not assume that a funder is familiar with jargon or acronyms, even if they are commonly used or understood in the field. Avoid jargon, spell out any acronyms, and use commonly understood language in your proposal.





If Your Request Is Denied

Even the most outstanding ASES grantees will not receive funding every time they pursue a grant opportunity. Try not to be discouraged if your request is not approved. Instead, view rejection as an opportunity to build relationships and to learn what you could change or do better next time to increase your chances of success.

Request feedback on your proposal; many funders are willing to talk with programs they did not fund to provide feedback and suggestions. They may even be able to direct you to other funders with a greater interest in your program, if your request simply was not a good match for a particular funder's interests. If you continue to believe your program is a good fit with a funder's priorities, consider revising the proposal and submitting it in a future grant cycle. Some funders have an appeals process for organizations whose grant application has been declined. Just because you were turned down once does not mean you cannot be successful on a subsequent try.

Patience and perseverance generally do pay off, and grant-writing is no exception to this rule. Following the tips and avoiding the mistakes outlined in this chapter can help produce well-written proposals that convincingly convey to funders why your program is worthy of support. ASES grantees and site program leaders can then attract investments to meet the match and to enhance program offerings and activities.



Appendix A Sample After School Program Logic Model

This logic model for a hypothetical after school program was developed using the format presented in The Finance Project's Sustainability Planning Workbook at <http://www.financeproject.org/engage/workbook.asp>.

A+ After School Program Logic Model		
What Do You Want to Sustain?		How Will You Measure Your Progress?
Mission and Desired Results <i>Vision:</i> Children who participate in A+ After School do their best in school and life. <i>Result:</i> Children succeed in school and have strong self-esteem.		Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ School attendance rates ■ English/language arts assessment scores ■ Math assessment scores ■ Student self-esteem ■ Parent engagement in children's activities
Conditions and Causes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ High incidence of discipline and behavior problems ■ Poor self-esteem ■ Poor school attendance ■ Low academic achievement ■ Limited parental ability to support academic work because of language and education barriers and work schedules ■ Poverty/basic needs not fulfilled ■ Poor nutrition and health issues ■ Large class sizes ■ School day requirements and budgets limit enrichment and recreation opportunities ■ Lack of positive role models ■ Dangerous neighborhoods ■ Limited affordable after school activities in community 		
Strategies and Activities School-Based Academic and Enrichment Program <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ School-linked curriculum ■ Educational liaisons ■ Homework time ■ Youth development activities ■ Enrichment activities with partner agencies ■ Use of technology ■ Community service Physical Education and Recreation Activities Parent Education and Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Workshops—helping parents help children succeed in school; computer; other topics as requested by parents ■ Social and cultural activities—field trips; family nights 		Performance Measures Measures of Effect <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Homework completion rates as reported by teachers ■ School attendance rates ■ Student grades ■ Improvements in self-reported attitudes about school, self, and the future ■ Increase in parent participation in children's education (e.g., participation in parent-teacher conferences, self-reported assistance with homework) Measures of Effort <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Number of children served ■ Number of parents served ■ Hours per week in program ■ Student satisfaction with program ■ Parent satisfaction with program



Appendix B: Websites to Access Examples of Quality Grant Proposals

The following websites provide illustrative examples of successful grant proposals. These proposals were written for different funders, including local, state, and federal government agencies; private foundations; and corporate foundations.

Federal Funding Proposals from the U.S. Department of Education: The U.S. Department of Education's website provides examples of successful proposals for multiple federally funded programs, including Supplemental Educational Services (a state-administered program), the Carol M. White Physical Education Program, the Migrant Education High School Equivalency Program, Migrant Education-Even Start, and the Community Technology Centers grant competition. Available at: <http://www.ed.gov/about/inits/list/fbci/grants2.html>.

Prekindergarten–12 School Grant Opportunities: SchoolGrants has gathered numerous examples of successful grant proposals for programs, including the 21st Century Community Learning Centers program, the Carol M. White Physical Education Program, Enhancing Education Through Technology (Title II, Part D), Reading First, and Safe Schools/Healthy Students, and to various other public and private funders. Available at: http://www.k12grants.org/samples/samples_index.htm.

Private Foundation and Government Agency Proposals from Non-profit guides:

The web-based resource Non-profit guides provides a sample request for proposal and corresponding sample proposal for a public and a private funding request. Available at: http://www.npguides.org/guide/sample_proposals.htm.

Private Foundation Proposals from the American Philanthropy Review: The American Philanthropy Review provides a Guest Share section on its website to provide opportunities for grantwriters to share sample proposals and other fundraising resources. Available at: <http://charitychannel.com/guestshare/>.



Appendix C: Relevant Organizations and Web-Based Resources

Resources from The Finance Project

Federal Funding Catalog: A searchable database of The Finance Project's current federal funding guides enables users to search by uses of funds, federal agency, who can apply, type of funding, and matching requirement. Available at: <http://www.financeproject.org/fedfund/>.

Financing Strategies for Out-of-School Time Programs: Resources from The Finance Project provide in-depth information on sources such as the Child Care and Development Fund, the Workforce Investment Act, the Community Development Block Grant, Medicaid, food and nutrition programs, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and programs administered by the U.S. Department of Education, the U.S. Department of Justice, and the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Other resources address supporting rural programs, replacing initial grants, sustaining 21st Century Community Learning Center programs, financing transportation services and facility improvements, and creating dedicated local and state revenue sources. Available at: <http://www.financeproject.org/irc/ost.asp>.

Finding Funding: A Guide to Federal Sources for Youth Programs: This guide from The Finance Project outlines strategies for gaining access to and using federal funds and provides information on 103 funding sources offering supports for youth programming. Available at: http://www.financeproject.org/publications/findingfunding_PM.pdf.

Making the Match: Finding Funding for After School Education and Safety Programs: This user-friendly guide helps ASES grantees identify opportunities to raise cash and in-kind resources needed to meet grant requirements as well as to finance and sustain programs today and in the future. The publication offers practical information on potential funding opportunities for ASES-funded programs, including tips and tools for successfully accessing those opportunities. Examples of how the proposed funding strategies have been implemented in California communities also are presented. *Making the Match* is available at: <http://www.financeproject.org/pubs/index.asp>.

Sustainability Planning Workbook: The publication is organized into five modules that guide users through a step-by-step process of developing a written sustainability plan. The workbook helps users clarify their vision, identify key issues in sustaining their work, and develop strategies to achieve their long-term goals. Available for order at: <http://www.financeproject.org/engage/workbook.asp>.



Additional Organizations and Resources

Afterschool Alliance: This organization is dedicated to raising awareness of the importance of after school programs and advocating for quality, affordable programs for all children. Afterschool Alliance activities are focused in three main areas: serving as an information resource, building public awareness, and encouraging a grassroots constituency. Visit <http://www.afterschoolalliance.org>.

California Afterschool Network: This network provides leadership and links to state policymakers to support high-quality programs; offers a collective voice to support policies, research, public awareness campaigns, and innovative strategies; and builds networking partnerships to support opportunities for mutual learning. Visit <http://www.afterschoolnetwork.org>.

California Foundation DataBook: This resource provides a state-specific, comprehensive, up-to-date directory and database of grant-making foundations with a categorical listing of all the grants they made for the most recent year on record, including the foundation's stated purpose for awarding each grant. Visit <http://www.foundationdatabook.com>.

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance: This database provides information on all federal programs available to state and local governments; tribes; territories; domestic public, quasi-public, and private profit and nonprofit organizations and institutions; specialized groups; and individuals. Visit <http://www.cfda.gov>.

Corporate Voices for Working Families: This nonpartisan, nonprofit corporate membership organization brings the private sector's voice into the public dialogue on issues affecting working families. Available resources include toolkits to direct and inspire business engagement in after school programs and policies. Available at: <http://www.cvworkingfamilies.org/Afterschool/Afterschool.htm>.

Council on Foundations: This membership organization of more than 2,000 grant-making foundations and giving programs worldwide provides leadership expertise, legal services, networking opportunities, and other services to members and the general public. Visit <http://www.cof.org>.

Foundation Center: The center maintains a comprehensive database on U.S. grant-makers and their grants. Basic information is available on its website. The Foundation Center has an office and library in San Francisco, and its comprehensive database of private funders (Foundation Directory Online) and core collection of publications are available at multiple cooperating collections throughout the state (see <http://foundationcenter.org/collections/ccca.html> for a complete list). The center also operates research, education, and training programs designed to advance philanthropy at every level. Visit <http://www.foundationcenter.org>.

Grants.gov: This website includes information on more than 1,000 grant programs offered by all federal grant-making agencies. Grants.gov enables organizations to electronically find and apply for more than \$400 billion in federal grants. Visit <http://www.grants.gov>.

The Grantsmanship Center: This organization conducts workshops in grantsmanship training as well as earned income strategies for nonprofit organizations. Resources available on its website include daily grant announcements from the *Federal Register*, archives of *The Grantsmanship Center* magazine, and indexes of funding sources at the local, federal, and international levels. Visit <http://www.tgci.com>.

GuideStar: This organization is a leader in providing comprehensive data on more than 1.5 million nonprofit organizations, connecting them with donors, foundations, businesses, and governing agencies in a nationwide community of giving. Visit <http://www.guidestar.org>.

Non-profit guides: Non-profit guides are free web-based grant-writing tools for nonprofit organizations; charitable, educational, and public organizations; and other community-minded groups. The guides are designed to help established U.S.-based nonprofit organizations through the grant-writing process. Visit <http://www.npguides.org>.

Promising Practices Afterschool: This website is an effort to find and share what works in after school programs. Users can search for promising practices in the after school field from across the nation and share their practices to help build the discipline. The PPAS Listserv is a virtual community of after school program staff, youth workers, school-age care providers, educators, researchers, policymakers, and others with an interest in keeping up-to-date on the latest in after school programming. Visit <http://www.afterschool.org>.

School Grants: This website provides information on funding opportunities available to public and private nonprofit elementary and secondary schools and districts across the United States. It also provides online tips on grant-writing, fundraising ideas, and more. Visit <http://www.schoolgrants.org>.



About The Finance Project

Helping leaders finance and sustain initiatives that lead to better futures for children, families, and communities.

The Finance Project is an independent nonprofit research, consulting, technical assistance, and training firm for public- and private-sector leaders nationwide. It specializes in helping leaders plan and implement financing and sustainability strategies for initiatives that benefit children, families, and communities. Through a broad array of tools, products, and services, The Finance Project helps leaders make smart investment decisions, develop sound financing strategies, and build solid partnerships. To learn more, visit <http://www.financeproject.org>.

Financing and Sustaining Afterschool Education and Safety Programs

This publication is part of a series of resources for ASES Program grantees and sites on financing and sustaining their initiatives. This guide provides strategies and tips for leaders in California's schools, school districts, and community-based organizations on accessing grants from both the public and private sectors. It outlines considerations for identifying and pursuing grant funding opportunities, reviews the key components of a grant proposal and offers concrete suggestions for making each section succinct and compelling. An accompanying guide developed by The Finance Project, *Making the Match: Finding Funding for After School Education and Safety Programs*, helps ASES grantee and program leaders address the challenge of meeting the ASES Program matching requirement and think strategically about what funding they need, what resources they currently have and how to fill any gaps.

Also in this series, The Food Research and Action Center's *Making the Most of Child Nutrition Funding: A Guide for ASES Grantees* takes ASES grantees through the different strategies to obtain the maximum amount of federal nutrition funds. It explains the basics of the child nutrition programs, offers suggestions on which nutrition programs make the most sense in which circumstances, and provides tips on how to operate the nutrition programs successfully.





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